AMERICA'S #1 SUPER HERO!

ECLIPSE COMICS™

ATTENTION PARENTS: This issue contains graphic scenes of childbirth.

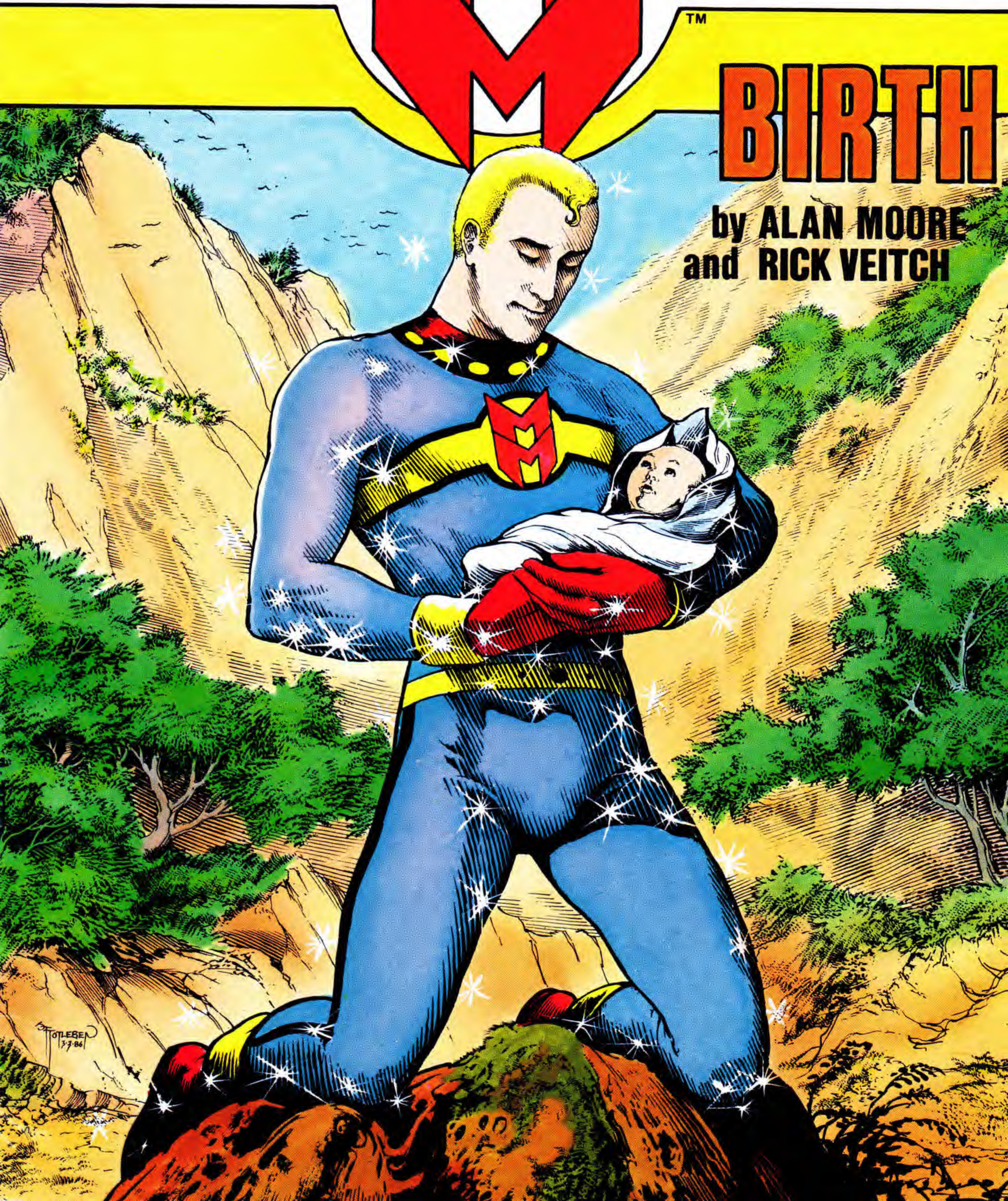
MIRACLEMAN

№ 9 95¢/ CAN. $1.25

™

BIRTH

by ALAN MOORE and RICK VEITCH



WAKE UP.

WAKE UP NOW.

IT'S TIME.

TIME..?

WHU...

OWWW.

MIKE..?

THE CONTRACTIONS ARE...

OH GOD.

MIKE.

OWWW.

ICH KANN'S NICHT VERSTEHEN. WO IST DER DOKTOR?

ICH WEISS ES NICHT! HINAUS– SCHNELL!

W-WAIT. WHERE'S EVERYBODY GOING?

ACH, NEIN! ICH HAB' DICH NICHT VERLETZT! ICH WAR NICHT SCHULD DARAN!

LASS MICH LOS!

WAR DAS..?

JA. DIE JUNGE FRAU VOM ÜBER-MENSCH. DIE MUTTER.

O GOTT, LAUF SCHNELL FORT!

OOOWW!

OOH, SHIT...

HELLO?

LOOK, FOR GOD'S SAKE, I'M HAVING A BLOODY BABY...

OH, COME ON!

WHERE IS EVERYBODY?

OWWWWW!

OH HELL. WHAT AM I GOING TO...

UH...

SCENES from the NATIVITY

ALAN MOORE — WRITER
RICK VEITCH — PENCILLER
RICK BRYANT — INKER
WAYNE TRUMAN — LETTERER
RON COURTNEY — COLORIST

HELLO.

HELLO.

OH MIKE. OH GOD, THAT DOG!

AND GARGUNZA... HE WANTED TO... THE BABY. HE WANTED TO...

SHHH. DON'T WORRY, MY LOVE. NOT ABOUT THE DOG OR GARGUNZA OR ANYONE. THEY CAN'T HARM YOU. THEY'RE GONE NOW.

ALL GONE AWAY.

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND.. THAT BLACK GUY, WITH THE TEETH. WHERE DID HE... OWW.

OOWWW

LIZ?

CONTRACTIONS. THEY WOKE ME UP A LITTLE WHILE AGO. THEY FEEL PRETTY STRONG.

HOW OFTEN?

EVERY FEW MINUTES. IT SHOULDN'T BE THAT FAST, SHOULD IT? NOT RIGHT AWAY...

DON'T WORRY. EVERYTHING'S FINE. WE'LL FIND SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE TO DELIVER IT.

NO.

NOT AROUND HERE. I DON'T WANT TO HAVE MY BABY IN THIS PLACE. CAN'T WE GO SOMEWHERE ELSE?

POWER WAGON

I DON'T SEE HOW. IF I WERE TO CARRY YOU YOU'D BE TOO COLD AND UNCOMFORTABLE. YOU'D PROBABLY FREEZE BEFORE I...

WAIT A MINUTE.

THIS WILL DO.

GET IN.

A TRUCK? BUT I MEANT...

JUST GET IN, START THE ENGINE, AND TURN THE HEATER ON FULL.

AND DON'T FORGET YOUR SEATBELT.

MIKE, I... OOWWW.

AHUHH AHUHH AHUHH... I DON'T THINK THIS IS THE SORT OF TRANSPORT I NEED.

IT'S NOT...

TAKE THE HANDBRAKE OFF.

WELL, OKAY, BUT I DON'T...

MIKE? MIKE, WE'RE MOVING. ARE YOU DOING THAT?

DON'T GO TOO FAST...

I SAID DON'T GO TOO FAST!

I'M GETTING READY TO HAVE A BABY UP HERE AND I'M SUPPOSE TO AVOID SUDDEN SHOCKS. THEY'RE NOT...

GOOD

FOR

ME.

JESUS.

BAAAAAAP

MIKE?

YOU SAID GARGUNZA WAS GONE.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?

I THREW HIM AT A PLANET.

OH

INTERLUDE:

SAINT CRISPIN'S HOSPITAL FOR THE MENTALLY ILL CHILDREN'S WARD

ALL VISITORS MUST CHECK IN AT REGISTRATION DESK

FIRE HOSE

<FIRST OF FIVE CUCKOOS WE MUST INSPECT IS WITHIN, BROTHER. DOES THIS DESTABILIZE YOUR PSYCHO-CHEMIC BALANCE?>

<NO. MERELY WISH THIS DONE AND HINDWARDS, AND WE HOME WITH OUR WIVES. LET US ENTER.>

HELLO, MISS. WE ARE WORK FOR AIR FORCE. WE WISH TO SEE CHILD BATES.

WHAT?

NO...NO VISITORS JUST NOW, LOVE. NOT UNLESS YOU'VE GOT SOME *IDENTIFICATION*...

YES, YES. IDENTIFICATION IS HERE...

LOOK:

YOU DO NOT SEE PENCIL.

YOU SEE IDENTIFICATION FOR AIR FORCE.

NOW: TELL US THAT WE CAN ENTER.

MNH?

UHH, OH, WELL, THAT ALL SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER. PLEASE GO RIGHT IN.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

JERRY'S KIDS

FIRE HOSE

<OBSERVE. WITHDRAWAL OF THE "I." CHANGE-SHOCK HAS LEFT CHILD IN *HRUMU* TRANCE-STATE.>

<WE MUST DETERMINE IF IT IS PERMANENT. IF CHILD IS INSENSITIVE TO EXTERNAL STIMULI...

...THEN LET US GO *INSIDE*.>

CHILD BATES?

WE ARE COME TO TALK WITH YOU.

WE WISH INFORMATION OF YOUR CHANGE-SELF. IS HE STILL VIABLE IN THESE SPACES?

IT IS USELESS: NO RESPONSE. THE *HRUMU*-TRANCE MUST BE SEVERE.

THERE IS NO INDICATION OF THE CHANGE-SELF. LACKING EVIDENCE, WE MUST ASSUME SHOCK HAS DESTROYED MIND-PIVOT.

HE IS HARMLESS. LET US LEAVE.

NOW WHAT THE HELL WERE *THEY*?

AAAAAA!!

AHH-HHUHHHH

MIKE?

M-MIKE, I THINK IT'S COMING...

AHH-HHUHHHH

IS THE HEAD ENGAGED YET? CAN YOU SEE THE...

AOW! AAOOW!

YES...I CAN SEE THE FONTANELLE AND IT DOESN'T FEEL AS IF THE CORD'S TANGLED. JUST KEEP BREATHING.

WH-WHAT DO YOU THINK I'M GOING TO DO? STOP? I'M NOT...

OOOOWWWW!

OH MIKE, IT HURRRTS.

I CAN'T DO THIS. NOT ON MY OWN. I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH...

OHH GODDD!

YOU'RE DOING FINE.

DON'T TALK OR MAKE ANY NOISE. JUST TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND PUSH AGAIN...

NNNNHHH. NNNNN-

NNUHH!

OH CHRIST, SOMEBODY JUST STOP IT...

HER UPPER BODY TRIES TO SCRABBLE BACKWARDS AWAY FROM THE PAIN I CANNOT REMOVE. BETWEEN HER LEGS THE SOFT SKULL PULSES, GRAY WITH MUCOUS.

IS THIS IT, GARGUNZA?

IS THIS WHAT ALL THOSE YEARS WERE FOR?

LIZ TOLD ME ABOUT THE ALIENS.

IS THIS WHAT THEY CROSSED A COLD ETERNITY TO DIE FOR, DROPPING OUT OF A TORN SKY IN THEIR IMPOSSIBLE, CRIPPLED MACHINE?

SHE GRASPS MY HAND THEN PUSHES IT AWAY. SHE SWEARS AT ME FOR MY STUPIDITY THEN PULLS ME CLOSE AND SAYS SHE'S SORRY, HER VOICE A RAGGED WHISPER.

THE PAIN COMES AGAIN, A GREAT, SHATTERING WAVE...

IS *THIS* THE REASON FOR ALL THOSE LONG NIGHTS, PICKING AMONGST THE BONES OF ANGELS FOR A CLUE TO THEIR DIVINITY? ALL THAT *WORK*? ALL THAT *EFFORT*?

SHE PUSHES, A TIGHT SILENCE THAT ENDS IN A SOB, THEN BREATHES QUICKLY, DESPERATELY, LIKE A BEACHED MERMAID.

THE PAIN COMES AGAIN, AN EARTH TREMOR RIPPLING OUT FROM HER MOLTEN CORE...

IS *THIS* WHAT WE *LIVED* FOR? YOU, ME, LIZ, OUR PARENTS, *THEIR* PARENTS?

MORAN'S MOTHER SAID "MICHAEL?" AND SQUEEZED HIS HAND. HE SQUEEZED BACK, WAITING FOR HER TO CONTINUE. HER HAND GREW GRADUALLY COLDER.

HER BODY IS SHUDDERING. HER FINGERS CLENCH TIGHT AROUND MINE AS IF SHE'S FRIGHTENED OF FALLING OFF THE WORLD.

THE PAIN GETS AS BAD AS IT POSSIBLY CAN AND THEN GETS WORSE.

IF YOU HADN'T CHOSEN MORAN'S NAME FROM THAT LIST OF AIRFORCE ORPHANS, IF THE KIDNAPPING HAD GONE WRONG...

ALL THESE THINGS, THAT DID OR DID NOT HAPPEN, ALL LEADING HERE, TO NOW, TO THIS SINGULAR EVENT...

IT'S COMING.

IT'S COMING NOW...

DID IT FEEL LIKE THIS, WHEN YOU TOOK THE FIRST CELL SCRAPINGS? DID IT FEEL LIKE THIS AS YOU WATCHED IT DIVIDE AND REPLICATE; AS YOU HAULED ME DRIPPING FROM THE TANK?

THE HEAD EMERGES: A FACE DRAWN ON A FIST. MY EYES CANNOT GRASP THE ***FACT*** OF IT: A HEAD, PROTRUDING FROM INSIDE HER. IT LOOKS SO HIDEOUS, BEAUTIFUL, ABSURD, AWESOME...

BUT OF COURSE. OF COURSE.

THIS.

THIS PERFECTION IS WHAT CAME OF ALL THE ***CHAOS*** AND ***MADNESS***. ALL THE LIES YOU WOVE AROUND ME HAVE BOILED DOWN TO THIS ONE ***TRUTH***.

ALL THE NIGHTMARES YOU FED ME HAVE BEEN DISTILLED...

...TO THIS SINGLE DREAM.

WAS IT **WORTH** IT? WORTH THE RISK OF LOOSING **GODS** AND **MONSTERS** ON THE WORLD? WORTH ALL THE **BLOOD** AND **VIOLENCE**?

YES. IT WAS WORTH IT...

FOR **HERE** IS BLOOD.

HERE IS VIOLENCE...

...REDEEMED BY LOVE, BY THIS PURE ACT OF **CREATION**.

YOU WERE THE ONLY LOSER, GARGUNZA. YOUR DREAMS CAME TO NOTHING AND WERE SMALL TO BEGIN WITH. A WORTHLESS LIFE, EXTENDED INDEFINITELY, IS YET WORTHLESS.

YOU THOUGHT IMMORTALITY WAS YOUR **PURPOSE**. IT WASN'T. **THIS** WAS YOUR PURPOSE, YOUR ONLY **FUNCTION**...

THE MOMENT SWELLS, AN ORGAN CHORD, DEEP AND PROLONGED. ADRENALINE SHARPENS MY PERCEPTIONS UNTIL EACH INSTANT GLITTERS LIKE A DIAMOND.

LIZ IS MOANING, GREAT RACKING SOBS OF RELIEF, OR ECSTASY...

LAST NIGHT, I SAW A UNIQUE LIFE VANISH FOREVER.

WHERE DO THEY GO?

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

IN THE CARELESS AND FOGGY CONTINUUM OF OUR LIVES, THESE PRECIOUS MOMENTS BURN LIKE SUNS: BIRTH, DEATH...

THESE ARE THE MOMENTS WHEN WE ARE REAL.

LIZ IS CRYING; LAUGHING; ASKING, "IS SHE ALL RIGHT? IS SHE ALL RIGHT?" OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

YES.

YES, SHE'S ALL RIGHT.

REMOVING MY GLOVE, I SNIP THE UMBILICAL CORD WITH MY THUMBNAIL AND KNOT IT INTO A NAVEL.

MOMENTS LATER THE PLACENTA SLIDES OUT, A MARVELOUS LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM OF GLISTENING BURGUNDY, NO LONGER NEEDED.

IT IS OCTOBER 29TH, 1982. LIZ HOLDS OUR DAUGHTER IN HER ARMS. WE ARE TOGETHER AGAIN, AND ALL THE DRAGONS ARE SLAIN.

OUR WORLD IS SAFE, AND SANE...

...AND SILENT.

MA-MA.

TO BE CONTINUED...